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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Production and Marketing Admin.
Information Service
821 Market Street, Room 609
San Francisco 3, California

In cooperation with the
Federal-State Market News Service

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WHAT'S NEWS IN THE MARKETS?

(USDA Food Bulletin for the week ending April 4, 1947)

SAN FRANCISCO, April 1---Easter week fruit bowl colors are green and yellow, with California Newtown apples and grapefruit still topping the best fruit buys.

Oranges are higher priced on the large sizes, but the small sizes are a fair buy. A few Valencia oranges are now coming in from Tulare, the Imperial Valley and Arizona.

Strawberries are still in light supply and high priced.

Artichokes take the lead of best vegetable buys at the lowest prices in several years. Asparagus takes second billing, with quality good and prices down to mid-season levels. Spinach stands third in plentiful supply and low priced.

There is much in the fair buy class this week. Included are cabbage, lettuce at lower prices, peas unchanged in price, onions, potatoes, rhubarb, soft squash, sweet potatoes, and small tomatoes.

Although large tomatoes are still a little high, prices are considerably lower than last week.

Bunched radishes, green onions and various kinds of greens are also fair buys.

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This week's meat supply included about 5,000 spring lambs. But the clearance of old-crop lambs from the market was not complete. As a result, Good and Choice carcasses took a price drop of $2.00, making a loss of $7.00 to $8.00 for the month of March. A drastic cut in slaughter saw some previously contracted lambs moving to the Mid-West alive. The gap between prices on the old-crop lambs and the new crop is the widest in recent years. Although Choice grade steer beef is very limited in supply, there is a fair offering of Good grade. Commercial and Utility cow beef is little wanted. In general, the quality is improved on veal, but there isn't much demand. Fresh pork cuts are enjoying an improved demand, but pre-Easter demand for smoked ham is only fair. No change in bacon.

Wholesale butter prices are down another 4 to 4½ cents per pound this week. Grade A (92 Score) is quoted at 67 cents per pound and Grade B (90 Score) at 63¢. Supplies are moderately heavy and in fairly good demand.

There are plenty of eggs to take care of all Easter festivities, but prices are 1 cent per dozen higher on all Grade "A" eggs. Quotations run at 47½ cents per dozen on Grade "A" Large eggs, 44½ cents on Mediums, and at 39½ cents on Smalls. Grade "B" Large eggs are still quoted at 42½ cents.

Although there is very little change in poultry prices from a week ago, both live and dressed broilers are 1 cent per pound less and young hen turkeys (dressed) are 1 to 4 cents per pound lower. Turkeys are plentiful, and with dressed prices at 39 to 40 cents per pound on young hens and at 36 to 37 cents on toms, they should be attractive to the homemaker planning an Easter dinner. All other classes of poultry are in ample supply, too.

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WHAT'S NEWS IN THE MARKETS?

(USDA Food Bulletin for the week ending April 11, 1947)

SAN FRANCISCO, April 8 -- Prospects for strawberry shortcake are improving as more of these crimson berries with the bright green caps are coming into the market every day, but while the price has gone down some with the influx of local, Salinas, and San Joaquin berries, it is still pretty high. Only two items appear on the best fruit buy list -- California Newtown apples and grapefruit of all sizes. When buying oranges, select the small size for a fair buy.

The best buys in the vegetable line are artichokes which are unusually low for this time of year; asparagus which is of good quality and moderately priced; and spinach. Other fair buys are carrots which are coming down slowly in price, onions, potatoes, peas and rhubarb. Now that spare stamp No. 11 is valid for ten pounds of sugar, many families can enjoy rhubarb sauce or pie for dessert.

A quick glance at the other vegetable items on the market shows us that tomatoes have gone up for the first time in several weeks and that those of good quality are scarce. Peppers continue to go up in price, soft squash is a little lower. And we can class those salad indispensables -- green onions, radishes and parsley -- as fair buys today.

APR 28 1947
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For the most part this week, prices on meat drifted downward. Beef is an exception because of higher replacement costs on live cattle. As a result, Commercial to Good steer and heifer beef carcasses are mostly $1.00 higher. Available supplies of veal are in fair demand and selling on a wide range of quality. With practically no old-crop lambs left on the market, prices are down about $2.00 on spring lambs. Quality is mostly Good and Choice. Ewe mutton is scarce, but there is very little local demand for it. Although demand is fairly active for the rather light supplies of fresh pork, the majority of prices are unchanged. Forced sales of smoked ham for Easter find prices down about $4.00 and the lowest in several weeks. Bacon remains unchanged.

There is a good supply of butter as the result of increases in production. But demand is only fairly good. Prices are a little lower than last week, with Grade A (92 Score) down 1 cent at 66 cents per pound and Grade B (90 Score) 1/2-cent lower at 62½ cents.

Egg prices are up 1 cent per dozen on Grade "A" Large and Mediums as the result of higher prices in Central Western markets and a good local demand. Grade "A" Large are quoted at 47½ to 48½ cents per dozen and Mediums at 44½ to 45½ cents. Grade "A" Smalls remain at 39½ cents and Grade "B" Large at 42½ cents per dozen.

On the poultry market, we find liberal supplies of Leghorn fowl, young colored chickens, and old turkey hens. Colored hens are scarce and there are fewer broilers. But all prices are unchanged from last week. All classes seem to be in good demand, except Leghorn fowl.

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WHAT'S NEWS IN THE MARKETS?

(USDA Food Bulletin for the week ending April 18, 1947)

SAN FRANCISCO, April 15----This week's prospects for strawberry shortcake are quite a lot better than they were last week. These versatile berries have been coming to market quite rapidly and more can be expected. Prices are coming down. At the same time, Newtown Pippin apples from Watsonville and all sizes of grapefruit remain tops as the best fruit buys.

Artichokes lead the parade of best vegetable buys at an all-time low of prices, while asparagus, peas and spinach follow closely at low prices. Rhubarb is also a good buy, if homemakers have some sugar to spare.

Carrots are gradually coming down in price, and along with dry onions and potatoes make up the fair buy class this week.

Snap beans are getting lower priced, but they are still high enough to be classed as a luxury. Celery, good tomatoes, and peppers also continue high in price, but there are some nice new red potatoes (Bliss Triumphs) coming in from Texas that should be lower priced before too long.

Meat is plentiful -- especially because warm weather is slowing down demand. In fact, demand for beef has been too slack to clear all supplies, including some offerings from the Junior Livestock Show. Available supplies of veal are enjoying a fairly broad demand, but there is a rather wide range of quality. On spring lambs, market prices have widened downward $1.00 to $3.00 on an ample supply. But ewe mutton is in light supply. As the result of less demand, supplies of fresh pork are fairly plentiful. About the only change in prices exists on heavy smoked hams, which are $1.00 to $2.00 lower, and smoked bacon, which is down $3.00.

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There is plenty of butter to be had, with Grade A (92 Score) 1 cent lower at 65 cents per pound. Production has been increasing rapidly here in California, while over the country as a whole, creamery butter production for the week ending April 3 was 2 percent larger than for the previous week and 35 percent above last year.

Contrary to the normal trend of prices on eggs for this time of year, all Grade "A" eggs are up 2 cents per dozen from last week and Grade "B" Large eggs are 4 cents higher, making prices 8 to 10 cents per dozen higher than a year ago. Easter week registered the largest sales week on record, with the result that there were few stocks left. Other factors that make for higher prices are higher prices in Central Western and Eastern markets and a continued good local demand.

Supplies of poultry are ample, even though Leghorn broilers and colored fowl are scarce. Leghorn fowl, as well as colored fryers, are in liberal supply. As a result, prices are 2 to 3 cents higher on broilers, up 1 to 2 cents on fryers, and 1 cent higher on roasters. But Leghorn fowl are selling 1 cent per pound lower. Old hen turkeys are wholesaling at 33 to 34 cents per pound and frozen young toms at 32 to 33 cents.

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WHAT'S NEWS IN THE MARKETS?

(USDA Food Bulletin for the week ending April 25, 1947)

SAN FRANCISCO, April 22 --- Cherries are ripe! And watermelons, too. But they are high priced. The first Purple Guigne cherries from Solano County have arrived and are wholesaling at about 40 cents per pound, while the first watermelons to come in from Mexico are selling around 11 to 12 cents per pound.

Small to medium sized oranges, grapefruit, and Newtown Pippin apples are still the best buys.

Avocados are lower this week and a fair buy, along with lemons at unchanged prices.

Strawberries continue to become more plentiful, and although prices are lower than last week, they are still rather high.

In looking over vegetable supplies, we find artichokes, carrots, and summer and Italian squash are the best buys.

Asparagus is slightly higher priced and past its peak; therefore, homemakers wishing to can had better get busy soon.

Other fair vegetable buys include: Broccoli (slightly lower), cabbage, cauliflower, celery (slightly lower), lettuce, dry onions, and potatoes, with more plentiful supplies of new-crop potatoes at slightly lower prices, sweet potatoes, and peas (slightly higher).

More tomatoes from Imperial and Coachella valleys are available at lower prices, but they are still high. Eggplant is another high-priced item that is becoming more plentiful. And this week sees the first sweet corn to come in from Southern California at a high price.

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Last week's warm weather caused more interest in a trip to the beach than in what kind of meat would be served for dinner. The telephone strike isn't an aid in the demand for meat, either. As a result, prices are lower on some items and uneven on others. Supplies of all classes are ample. Beef supplies are experiencing the first influx of grassy steers, but otherwise quality is running mostly Commercial to Good, with a few Choice. Veal shows a rather wide range of quality that is fully ample for demand. Plentiful supplies of Good and Choice grades of lamb are selling at uneven and lower prices, while ewe mutton is in very light supply and little wanted. Prices on pork are on the biggest downgrade. Pork carcasses are $2.00 lower, picnics $1.00 less, and spareribs are off $5.00 this week. Both hams and bacon are lower priced, with skinned smoked hams selling $3.00 to $4.00 lower and 8-pound and heavier bacon at $5.00 to $6.00 less.

Liberal supplies of butter are not enjoying a very active demand. As a result, prices are 3 cents per pound lower on Grade A (92 Score) at 62 cents per pound and 2½ cents less on Grade B (90 Score) at 60 cents. If we take a look at some of the available figures, we find that compared with the corresponding week of April 17 last year, production here in the West was 69% greater. In San Francisco -- for the week ending April 12 -- retail sales were 7% less than for the previous week, but were 188% above last year.

Higher egg prices in Central Western markets, together with a continued good local demand and declining production, are resulting in higher local prices. All grades of eggs are up 3 cents per dozen over last week. Grade "A" Large eggs are quoted at 53½¢ per dozen, Mediums at 50½¢, Smalls at 44½¢, and Grade "B" Large at 49½¢.

There is very little change on poultry. Supplies are ample, demand fairly good, and all prices unchanged from a week ago.